

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 305297
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 AID-05 USIA-06 IO-13 CU-04
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APPROVED BY AF:WEDMONDSON
AF/S:DKEOGH
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D/HA:RMAXIM (PHONE)
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 305297

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, BC

SUBJECT: RECOGNIZING POSITIVE HUMAN RIGHTS BEHAVIOR
IN BOTSWANA: STATUS REPORT

REF: (A) GABORONE 2663; (B) GABORONE 3067

I. SUMMARY: DEPARTMENT FULLY ENDORSES EFFORTS TO TRANSLATE
GENERAL SYMPATHY FOR BOTSWANA'S OUTSTANDING RECORD OF
NON-RACIALISM AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INTO POSITIVE
RECOGNITION AND IS CONTINUING TO EXPLORE MEANS OF DOING SO.
THIS MESSAGE RESPONDS TO REF (B) REQUEST FOR STATUS REPORT
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PAGE 02 STATE 305297

ON EFFORTS AND EVALUATION OF PROSPECTS OF SUGGESTIONS MADE
TO DATE. END SUMMARY. -

2. EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ON NON-RACIALISM: SAMPLES OF
REQUESTED MATERIALS HAVE BEEN POUCHED TO EMBASSY BY USIA.
DEPARTMENT IS IN CONTACT WITH PRIVATE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
GROUPS REGARDING SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL

MATERIALS.

3. POST OF HICOM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND UNESCO MEMBERSHIP:
CONCUR THAT THIS IS PREMATURE IN VIEW OF CONSIDERATIONS
ADVANCED IN ANALYSES BY EMBASSY AND US PERMDEL TO UNESCO.

4. INVITATION TO PRESIDENT KHAMA TO VISIT US: CONTRARY
TO INDICATIONS RECEIVED IN OCTOBER, IT NOW APPEARS
EXTREMELY UNLIKELY THAT DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE ANOTHER
OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1978 STATE
VISITS. WHITE HOUSE HAS ASKED THAT CURRENT RECOMMENDA-
TIONS BE REVIEWED FOR ABSOLUTE PRIORITY AND NO ADDITIONAL
REQUESTS BE MADE. KHAMA INVITATION SIMPLY DOES NOT
LOOK POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME.

5. VISIT TO BOTSWANA BY RANKING US OFFICIALS: SINCE
RECENT VISIT TO GABORONE BY AMBASSADOR MCHENRY AND DON
PETTERSON DURING CONTACT GROUP TALKS DID NOT PROVIDE
OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS EMBASSY'S HUMAN RIGHTS SUGGESTIONS,
DEPARTMENT IS STILL ACTIVELY EXPLORING POSSIBILITY OF
HAVING SENIOR US OFFICIAL VISIT BOTSWANA TO CONVEY
MESSAGE OF US SUPPORT FOR GOB'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD.
IT IS NOT APPARENTLY FEASIBLE TO AWARD US DECORATION
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PAGE 03 STATE 305297

OR MEDAL TO PRESIDENT KHAMA FOR HIS ROLE IN THIS
REGARD, BUT SUGGESTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS LINKED DISCREETLY
BUT DIRECTLY TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IS BEING ACTIVELY
STUDIED.

6. AS ONE WAY AROUND DIFFICULTIES OUTLINED ABOVE,
DEPARTMENT IS EXPLORING POSSIBILITY OF ENCOURAGING THE
AWARDING OF AN HONORARY DEGREE TO PRESIDENT KHAMA BY
AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE IN RECOGNITION OF
HIS ROLE IN DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. SHOULD SUCH AN
AWARD BE MADE AND SHOULD KHAMA AGREE TO COME TO THE US
TO ACCEPT IT, VISIT COULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET
SENIOR US OFFICIALS EVEN THOUGH STATE VISIT APPEARS
OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR 1978.

7. IN RESPONSE TO PARA 5 REF (A) NOTING THAT FREEDOM
HOUSE CORRECTLY IDENTIFIES BOTSWANA AS ONE OF ONLY
TWO "FREE" NATIONS IN AFRICA BUT PLACES IT IN CATEGORY
3,F 7 REGARDING CIVIL RIGHTS, DEPARTMENT CONTACTED
FREEDOM HOUSE TO CALL ATTENTION TO EVIDENCE SUPPORTING
HIGHER RATING. FREEDOM HOUSE WAS INITIALLY RELUCTANT
TO GIVE CREDENCE TO CONTENTION THAT ALL FOUR CRITERIA

IT LISTS AS CRUCIAL IN REGARD TO CIVIL RIGHTS (FREEDOM FROM POLITICAL CENSORSHIP, OPEN POLITICAL DISCUSSION, RULE OF LAW AND FREEDOM FROM GOVERNMENT TERROR) WERE ACTUALLY MET BY BOTSWANA. HOWEVER, IT AGREED TO DISCUSS MATTER FURTHER AT FOLLOWUP MEETING FOR WHICH AF AND D/HA OFFERED TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC INFORMATION CONCERNING CIVIL RIGHTS CONDITIONS ADDRESSED IN FORTHCOMING CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

8. ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS IN REF (B) FOR PROGRAMS FINANCED THROUGH SECTION 116 OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT WILL BE ASSESSED IN JOINT STATE/AID SEPTTEL.

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PAGE 04 STATE 305297

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